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BETTER PLANTS

God's first gift to man was a Beautiful Garden



VOLUME V

JULY—AUGUST, 1927

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U. S. Department of Agriculture.



The garden of Mrs. J. H. Confer, Lindenwood, Ill., shows Farr Iris to distinct advantage

S. B. Mason, of Rheems, Pa., writes, "Notice the wonderful size of the blooms on these two-year plants."

Eight distinct varieties of Iris are shown in this picture sent us by Mrs. Fred Eichner of Pontiac, Mich.

This group of Farr Iris was photographed in June, 1926, in the garden of Dr. Lolabel Hall, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Here and There with Iris

Comments from Customers and Friends who prize their collections of Iris above most other garden plants

Iris Border in the Garden of Mrs. J. H. Confer, Lindenwood, Ill.

Place the bulbs in a well-drained location, at least 10 inches apart, setting to a depth which will leave the upper fourth of the bulb exposed to air and sun, and spreading the projecting roots. Pack the ground firmly and water until new root-growth is established. Do not apply manure to the soil; use lime and bone-meal. If the soil is soggy, add sand and plenty of lime; if light and sandy, add clay or humus.

Irises, Mme. Pacquette, Pallida dalmatica, Her Majesty, Perfection, Nibelungen, Flavescens, Lohengrin, Mme. Chereau, Mme. de Sevigne in the garden of Mrs. Fred A. Eichner, Pontiac, Mich.

Mrs. Eichner says, in her letter of September 14, 1926: "I have enclosed two 'snaps' of parts of my iris beds. I now have fifty-eight varieties and will continue till I haven't room for more. They mean so much to me. In the 'snap' where you can see the irises in rows, the rows are about 35 feet in length. I tend them myself, besides raising Pekingese dogs. Between these, my two hobbies, I'm very happy."

Garden of S. B. Mason, Rheems, Pa.

Second-year bloom from Farr irises. Mr. Mason says: "I am not able to praise your irises too highly, for I know what they are. When you plant Farr irises you can depend upon them coming true to name. What I have are truly wonderful."

(Continued on page 2)

WHY PICK FLOWERS?

If flowers are not picked, they will go to seed, and once the plant is seeding, the season of blossom is doomed. Consequently, to lengthen the blossoming season, we must withhold the energies of the plant from its ultimate course of seed-production and direct that strength toward producing growth and flowers. A plant kept cut produces better and more abundant flowers. This is true of both annuals and perennials.

HOLLAND BULBS

Do not permit tulips to go to seed as it weakens the bulbs. After blooming, the bulbs should be dug up and tucked into an out-of-the-way corner, variety by variety, to ripen, after which they may be placed in bags or boxes till time for fall planting. Or the bulbs may stay where they are, and when the leaves have died down, plant a succession crop, such as nigella, baby's-breath, or mignonette. The leaves should never be cut off, because they are necessary for the ripening of the bulb; they can be tied up, however, when kept in the soil. Darwin and Breeder tulips last about three years, after which they have to be replaced.

Many Irises Have a Pronounced Fragrance

While working with irises this season, a few notes have been made on their fragrance, which may prove of interest to those who have this feature in mind when ordering a variety. The list is classified as follows:

Fragrant Bearded Irises

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| Archeveque | Florida | Jacquesiana | Oriental |
| Argus | Freya | King Christian | Prince Victor |
| Aurea Maculata | Gerda | Kochii | Rose Unique |
| Blue Boy | Halfdan | Lord of June | Rhein Nixe |
| Cecil Minturn | Her Majesty | Lurida | Sindjkhata |
| Etta | Ingeborg | Ma Mie | Walhalla |
| Flammenschwert | Ivorine | Obelisque | Zwanenberg |
| | | | Zua |

Very Fragrant Bearded Irises

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Edouard Michel | Mary Barnett | Seminole |
| Harriet Presby | Isoline | Shekinah |
| | Souv. de Mme. Gaudichau | |

Exceedingly Fragrant Bearded Irises

| | | |
|---------|------------|-------------------|
| Excelsa | Florentina | Princess Beatrice |
|---------|------------|-------------------|



Iris Border in the Garden of Mrs. Frank Robbins, Jr., Steelton, Pa.

Irises are invaluable as cut-flowers. If they are taken as the buds are about to open, and allowed to expand indoors, the colors will be much richer and they will last a long time, for as fast as one flower fades the next bud will take its place, until all have opened.

Cornell Bulletin No. 112

Growers in America have succeeded so well in presenting the best European productions to the public and in evolving distinct sorts for the fancier, that no garden is complete without some iris plants. Irises were probably first offered by the firm of the pioneer American nurseryman, William Prince, of Flushing, Long Island. In 1904, B. H. Farr imported, from England, Barr's and Wallace's best sorts, and he continued to keep pace with the European advance by adding their novelties to his own seedlings, all of which he catalogued about 1908. His prosperous business at Wyomissing, Pa., soon encouraged competitors as well as enthusiasts.

One seldom finds so wide and so interesting a range of color as that embraced by the bearded irises. Delicacy in tint and intensity of hue, together with the intermediate gradations of color, combine with the form, the carriage, the shape, and the size of their segments to produce subtle beauty or striking contrasts. And as if this were not enough, the translucence or opalescence found in some varieties taxes the enthusiast's vocabulary to describe the emotions awakened thereby. In surface texture, the segments grade from a smooth, glistening, silky sheen to the richest depths of velvet; some varieties become creped, cockled, and crumpled; and some even fade or take on dull, neutral tones. The flower may be delicate, as frail little Celeste, chaste, as La Neige, or outstanding, as Lent A. Williamson.

If the iris does not appeal to any other sense, it will surely appeal to the sense of smell. Its fragrance has the odor of grape-juice in Caprice, of clover in Innocenza, of delicate iris in Fairy, of very strong iris in *P. odoratissima*, and of bitter almond or of lemon in others. Its faint perfume is one that cannot be rivaled by that of other blooms.

MASS PLANTING

- attracts attention.
- provides profusion of cut-flowers.
- compels admiration.
- creates a focus-point.
- dispels the hedge-podge.
- presents color-contrast.
- costs less per unit.

SURPLUS IRIS OFFER
FOR MASS DISPLAY

(Effective until August 1)

Not less than 10 of one kind sold

10 to 24 plants at the 10 rate.

25 or more plants at the 25 rate.

| White Irises | 10 rate | 25 rate |
|---------------------|---------|---------|
| Camelot..... | \$0 15 | \$0 12 |
| Dorothea..... | 15 | 12 |
| Florentina..... | 15 | 12 |
| Halfdan..... | 15 | 12 |
| King Christian..... | 15 | 12 |
| Odin..... | 15 | 12 |

Violet Irises

| | | |
|-----------------|----|----|
| Assyrian..... | 15 | 12 |
| Dalmarius..... | 15 | 12 |
| Faith..... | 15 | 12 |
| Pauline..... | 15 | 12 |
| Perfection..... | 15 | 12 |
| Viking..... | 15 | 12 |

Yellow Irises

| | | |
|---------------------|----|----|
| Flavescens..... | 20 | 18 |
| Sherwin-Wright..... | 18 | 15 |
| Comanche..... | 50 | 40 |
| Empire..... | 20 | 18 |
| Onnoris..... | 18 | 15 |

Lavender-toned Irises

| | | |
|----------------|----|----|
| Cengialti..... | 15 | 12 |
| Dolphin..... | 15 | 12 |

Blue Irises

| | | |
|------------------------|----|----|
| Blue Jay..... | 15 | 12 |
| Charmant..... | 12 | 10 |
| James Boyd..... | 12 | 10 |
| Oriental..... | 12 | 10 |
| Pallida Dalmatica..... | 30 | 25 |
| Rotorua..... | 12 | 10 |
| Swatara..... | 12 | 10 |

Dark Blue Irises

| | | |
|---------------------------|----|----|
| Blue Boy..... | 15 | 12 |
| Massasoit..... | 15 | 12 |
| Violacea Grandiflora..... | 15 | 12 |

Purple-shaded Irises

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|
| Alcazar..... | 20 | 18 |
| Kochii..... | 20 | 18 |
| Lent A. Williamson..... | 70 | 65 |
| Mandalisca..... | 15 | 12 |
| Mrs. Cowley..... | 20 | 18 |
| Oporto..... | 18 | 15 |

Pink Irises

| | | |
|--------------------|----|----|
| Cecil Minturn..... | 50 | 40 |
| Lurline..... | 15 | 12 |
| Queen of May..... | 20 | 18 |
| Thelma Perry..... | 20 | 18 |

Reddish Irises

| | | |
|----------------|----|----|
| Caporal..... | 18 | 15 |
| Caprice..... | 18 | 15 |
| Dorman..... | 18 | 15 |
| Red Cloud..... | 20 | 18 |
| Robin..... | 18 | 15 |

Bronze Irises

| | | |
|--------------|----|----|
| Incana..... | 50 | 40 |
| Mithras..... | 20 | 18 |
| Navajo..... | 18 | 15 |
| Nothing..... | 12 | 10 |

(Continued on page 3)



**Iris Drive in the Garden of Mrs. S. S. Rutherford,
2902 Brishin St., Harrisburg, Pa.**

If you yield to the magic spell of the iris, it will lead you across the border into a wonderland of delight, for an iris-garden is a floral world in itself, so vast that to mention all the interesting forms would be impossible, as there are about one hundred and seventy distinct species, and varieties innumerable.

John Wister, President American Iris Society

Travel as you will over this great country and you will find a few irises growing in almost every dooryard garden, for they have been grown and appreciated since the days of the earliest settlers. But the amazing and discouraging thing is that those same gardeners who have had irises in their gardens as long as they can remember, have utterly failed to get any knowledge of the iris, except the one or two common kinds that they have been growing. They have failed to realize that they have seen but one or two of many thousands of kinds—kinds utterly different in color, form, size, height, and time of bloom, and that before them lie delights of which they have never even dreamed. *From Mr. Wister's book "The Iris" published by Orange Judd Co., New York City.*



Early May-flowering Irises in the Rock-garden at Wyomissing, Pa.

Many plants are comparable to cheap and gaudy pictures, novels, or movies. They appeal to the uncultured and the unrefined, or to those who are just beginning and who may later develop taste for enduring classics.

Irises are a work of art, a classic, and the flower of culture and refinement. Many people do not appreciate them at first glance, but once attention has been given, interest is aroused and someone has found a flower which will never be tiresome—a flower which can be looked at for hours and which exists in thousands of color and type combinations. Someone's garden will take on an added touch of refinement, and each blooming season will find additions to the "classic flower" library.

MASS PLANTING, concluded

| | 10 rate | 25 rate | |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--|
| Aragon..... | \$0 15 | \$0 12 | |
| Diadem | 12 | 10 | |
| Dora Langdon..... | 15 | 12 | |
| Fantasy..... | 15 | 12 | |
| Nirvana..... | 15 | 12 | |
| Nibelungen..... | 15 | 12 | |
| Paxatawny..... | 18 | 15 | |
| Prosper Laugier..... | 30 | 25 | |
| Powhatan..... | 15 | 12 | |
| Queen Alexandra..... | 15 | 12 | |

Dwarf Irises

| | | |
|--|----|----|
| Bluebeard. (Dull white and yellow; fragrant).. | 18 | 15 |
|--|----|----|

Mislabeled Irises

(Descriptions unknown)

| | | |
|--------------------|----|----|
| Sarah..... | 10 | 08 |
| Lady Shelford..... | 10 | 08 |
| Mixed Irises..... | 10 | 08 |

Pink and Blue Irises

| | | |
|------------------------|----|----|
| Unnamed, by color only | 10 | 08 |
|------------------------|----|----|

IMPORTANT

Read this before ordering

1. 5 per cent discount for cash with order.
2. Shipment when desired. July best.
3. Roots which will bloom next year; clean, strong, healthy.
4. Safe arrival guaranteed.
5. Money back if not satisfied.
6. Order early. Our bargains always sell out, which is our intention.
7. Hundred lots of one kind of 10 per cent discount from the 25 rate.

A Little Iris Investment That May Yield Ten-fold

For the first time in 20 years of producing and growing Farr Seedling Irises, we offer a limited quantity of unbloomed seedlings. We did not intend to do so this year, but every mail brings from one to many requests for these seedlings.

The seedlings we sell may deprive us of just the variety or varieties that will prove the best we have ever produced, so you can see why we have hesitated to sell them.

Believing, however, that in selling these unbloomed seedlings our act is fully appreciated, we will spare a limited quantity of unbloomed seedlings to our regular list of buyers only, at the following reasonable prices:

5 or more at 50 cts. each

25 or more at 35 cts. each

50 or more at 30 cts. each

Remember, an unbloomed seedling is a new variety from seed, and you probably will find something very extra in a quantity of them. You may find the finest iris yet produced and worth hundreds of dollars, but this is not the rule. One thing sure—there is at least one in every ten worth the price of the entire ten. The balance you have for nothing. Send your order at once to avoid disappointment.



One of our old friends, Mr. Joe Zwart, Des Moines, Iowa, sends us this picture of the iris path in his garden

Iris for Accent in the Perennial Border

You must see and study irises to appreciate them. They are not obtrusive like the "burning bush," the cockscomb, or the scarlet sage. Next May, pluck an iris bloom, examine it closely, and see if the "magic spell of hidden beauty" does not hold you and lead you into a wonderland of interest and delight. Irises have a structure more wonderful than the orchid, fragile as the lily, mysterious as the opal, colorful as the rainbow, softly iridescent, and hardy as the goldenrod. If you do not have any of the newer varieties of irises, locate a neighbor who does. You owe this to yourself and to your garden.

More and more irises are being sold in ten and hundred lots. Garden-lovers are just beginning to appreciate the beauty and effect of irises in mass, for bedding, borders, rock-gardens, pools, designs, walks, etc. The range of color, profuse bloom, low price, and the absolute hardiness of irises, which causes them to flourish where other plants fail, leave little excuse for unsightliness or monotony in any garden. Special quantity prices, as applied in this issue, encourage mass planting.



As Irises Grow for Mrs. Nelson M. Black, Green Tree Road, North Milwaukee, Wis.

Arrangement depends upon the taste of the owner, but irises are appropriate and will thrive in almost any location. Groups and masses of one variety are the best from a landscape point of view. Wonderful effects may be obtained by planting generous masses of irises along walks, drives, shrub-borders, streams, pools, and in rock-gardens. A mixture of varieties is seldom pleasing—better five to twenty-five plants of one kind in blending contrast to neighboring groups. Keep light and dark shades in sections by themselves. White, yellow, and pink go well together; red, purple, lavender, and blue are of another section.

Plant irises where other things will not grow. Use them to give you pride of ownership; for profit derived from their self-propagating qualities; for cut-flowers in house and market; for hours of communion with their magic spell of hidden beauty.

NEW IRIS, APACHE

This variety is from a group of seedlings hybridized some six years ago by Mr. Farr, and was first presented in our 1925 catalogue. It was at once accepted as a variety of unusual merit and at various iris shows has received certificates and honorable mention. The following description is from our catalogue:

S. coppery vinous purple (1-171), shading lighter at the base, with dark brown reticulation; F. a dark crimson-brown (4-166), with heavy light reticulation; beard yellow; stigma buff, shaded violet. Large flower with incurved or dome-shaped standards and wide-spreading falls. Slightly



fragrant. A very distinct and unusual color. Free bloomer. Vigorous grower. Strong substance. Certificates of award and honorable mention at Harrisburg (Pa.) Iris Shows. 20 in. \$10.

RAINBOW EFFECTS

Irises and tulips make an ideal spring combination. Tall bearded irises and Darwin tulips afford a wide range of colors, and the possible color schemes are infinite. Both are excellent for the decoration of the house in May and June.

COMPLIMENTS FROM CANADA

Plants arrived in splendid condition. Would like to say that "Better Plants by Farr" is certainly the whole truth and nothing but the truth. They are, without doubt, the finest, largest, and most healthy plants I have ever had from any nursery, and am both surprised and delighted.—W. BRADER, Brantford, Ontario, Can.

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin No. 1406

In the garden of the busy man or woman there should be no plants which require undue care or attention. This is especially true of the flower-garden on a farm, where labor is spent of necessity upon the vital activities of the farm business, and where it is the exception, rather than the rule, to find any individual with leisure enough to tend an elaborate flower-garden.

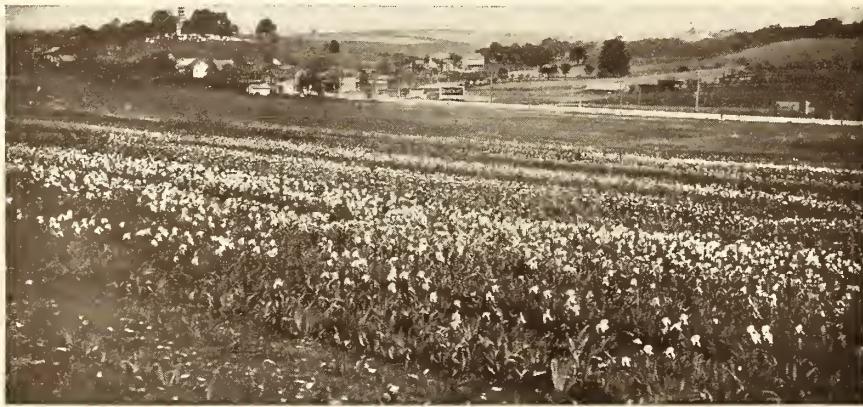
If the farmer has a garden where he grows flowers other than shrubs, which make the largest show for a minimum of care, there is no candidate more worthy than the iris. It is to be had in a variety of colors and forms equaled by few hardy plants, is tolerant of many adverse conditions, is subject to attacks from few diseases and insects, and is relatively permanent.



Farr Irises, Weiser Park, June, 1926

Each August the Farr plantsmen set a new and complete planting of the best varieties of irises, arranged alphabetically from Afterglow to Zua. A year and a half passes before shipments are made from this new planting, giving two blooming seasons for checking, field-notes, and trueing. Thus, there are always three separate plantings of each variety, except the very newest. Poor growth in one planting will not affect the entire stock of any variety, for there is always a reserve of good roots on hand. This plan is costly but is made possible because of the leadership and sales volume which the Farr name has acquired, and it has helped to triple Farr iris sales in the last four years. Can you think of a better way. If you can, we will want to know about it.

Better Plants, by Farr, does not mean that Farr plants are always better than those of any other grower, but it does mean that Farr quality and service are being improved in every way possible. The maintenance of three separate iris plantings is only one example. See the 1927 Farr catalogue for other details. Become a Farr customer and receive the benefit of our determination to fill every order in a manner which will encourage another.



Iris Plans for the Future

1. To grow and sell tested and accepted iris varieties on a commercial quantity basis rather than to introduce new varieties.
2. To discourage new varieties, unless they are twice as good as those already existing.
3. To encourage the use and handling of irises on a quantity basis similar to that of Holland bulbs. Irises cost little more to grow and handle than tulips, and should, and soon will, be consistently sold by the dozen instead of one each.

NO AGE-LIMIT HINDERS
ONE WHO GROWS IRISES

Years ago we asserted emphatically that Irises appealed to all ages. The small child reaches for the colorful blooms; youth sees a rainbow of color in the orchid-like flowers; and mature age looks with mingled affection and awe on the marvelous markings of standards and falls.

It is not surprising that the youthful flower-lover sees a delicate loveliness in the purity of White Knight or Anna Farr, in Wyomissing and the new Zua, in the softness of Georgia and Mt. Penn, or half-a-hundred other varieties.

Peculiar, isn't it, that Iowa seems to be the home of iris fanciers—as Virginia is said to be the "mother of presidents." In former issues of BETTER PLANTS we have told you about Mr. Farr's boyhood garden in Iowa, and how it developed into the gardens at Wyomissing, and later into the greater garden and nursery at Weiser Park.

Now Iowa presents another youth who is a fancier of irises and a successful hybridizer. The picture shows Mr. Peter

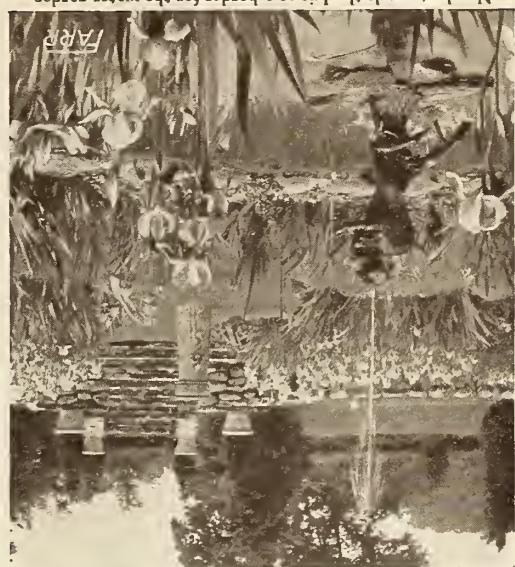


Peter Blaine Stuhlsatz, of Oskaloosa, Iowa, possibly the youngest iris hybridizer in America. His seedlings were displayed at the Southern Iowa Iris Show in 1926.

Blaine Stuhlsatz and his sister Vanitie. Last summer Mrs. Stuhlsatz wrote us about her son and from her letter we quote:

"The Southern Iowa Iris Show was largely attended and very successful. Through some error the American Iris Society Bulletin gave Mr. —— credit for some seedlings which our son exhibited there. Mr. —— did not exhibit nor even attend. Our boy is only 14, but we take pride in his interest and achievements. He has many seedlings, but only three does he consider worthy of interest, though he has many dark blue selfs along the Parc de Neuilly order."

I am very much pleased with the irises I ordered. They were all fresh, splendid roots and were received in fine condition.—Lewellyn Clinton, Wynncote, Pa.



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BETTER PLANTS

Farr's "Wordsworth" Collection of Narcissi

"A host of golden daffodils
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze."

| | Doz. |
|---------------------|--------|
| 1. Empress..... | \$1.75 |
| 2. Emperor..... | 1.75 |
| 3. Golden Spur..... | 1.75 |
| 4. Von Sion..... | 1.50 |
| 5. Sir Watkins..... | 1.75 |
| 6. Poeticus..... | 1.50 |

The varieties include Single Large Trumpet, Single Medium, Double and, Poet's Narcissi. The price per dozen is indicated, but as a collection we will sell

One dozen of each variety (72 bulbs, value \$10) for \$8, f. o. b. our nursery. Half-dozen of each for \$4.25. Two dozen of each for \$15.

No early order discount on these Collections. Prices are f. o. b. our station. A discount of 2 per cent is allowed for cash with order.

Instructions and Terms for Ordering

On all orders for Holland bulbs mailed to us before July 1, 1927, a discount of 10 per cent is allowed. An additional 2 per cent will be allowed on orders accompanied by cash.

Quantity Rates. Unless otherwise specified, less than 6 bulbs of one variety will not be supplied. The dozen rate is applicable on 6 or more bulbs of one variety; the 100 rate on 25 or more bulbs of one variety.

Prices are F. O. B. Our Station. Shipments are best made by express. If parcel post is necessary, charges are billed at actual postage, plus 12 cents to partly cover special packing details and service involved.

A HOST OF DAFFODILS

One can never have too many daffodils. Where space is limited, plant in the border; where there is a stretch of meadow or orchard land, they can be naturalized in quantity. Varieties for quantity planting, such as this, can be purchased quite reasonably.



Tulips Gretchen and Clara Butt, with Iberis in foreground. Garden of F. L. Brent, Hinsdale, Ill.



"Is a co
bridge clu
activities?"

COMMENTS FOR GARDENERS

judged by its
arden club ac
tivities?"

It is better to have a speaking acquaintance with bone-meal than to be a connoisseur of headache powders and potions.

Interest in a garden promotes better health and more happiness than a carload of vitamines or a tankful of yeast.

Quality, like virtue, is frequently its own reward, which accounts for much that we see about us. It is not found on the bargain counter, because the demand for it exceeds the supply.

White against white is a bold and striking flower combination for house decoration—white lilies and white stocks against a white wall. Visualize this grouping

without the flowers and the value of flowers in decoration is readily realized.

We grow flowers for three practical and numerous spiritual reasons. We grow them to look at in the garden, to cut and adorn the house, and to give away. These are the practical reasons. They are eminently sane and require no explanation.

"Having mentioned compost heaps and manure, let us lay aside false modesty and discuss these subjects. Because you can just as easily run an automobile without gasoline as you can raise flowers successfully without manure and compost, or raise a human being without giving it food. You can never become a good gardener until you can mention manure casually."—RICHARDSON WRIGHT.

FARR NURSERY COMPANY

Box 1025

Weiser Park, Pennsylvania

